DUST FALLS

By John French & 'Harry' Harrington

Jake: This month we see some more of the gangs from the Dust Falls campaign, together with a couple more of the scenarios they've come up with. I think the guys have done a great job of adding extra character and detail to their gangs, giving each of them a story and a background which they can then carry over onto their models and even their styles of play.

THE BROTHERHOOD OF THE TRUE RESURRECTION

A House Cawdor Necromunda Gang
By Alan Bligh

When I was asked by my friend Harry if I would like to join in a Necromunda campaign I didn't have to think hard about a reply. It had been a while since my old gang, (an Escher outfit that went by the name of the Nightside Hellions) had last stalked the Underhive in search of guilder creds and glory, and it would be good to get back into gang warfare again. I'd always enjoyed Necromunda; in particular I'd always liked its aspect as a campaign game and the fun that could be had clashing repeatedly with your mates to come out on top. So this would be an excellent chance for me come up with a new gang to play, get some use out of my shiny Underhive rulebook, pick up and convert some new miniatures (not that I ever need an excuse), and lastly (but not least) get some cool games in.

CHOOSING THE GANG

My first job was to choose who my new gang would be. Other than wanting to do something different to the Escher, I had a pretty open mind on this one. Now there

The Redemptionist spat a guttural mixture of obscenities and fevered prayers through the snarling mouth of his battered iron mask. He thrashed on the dusty ground in the circle of light, futilely trying to escape the bonds they had hog-tied him with, cursing into the darkness beyond.

"Be at peace brother," came the silken voice from the darkness, at once unknown and hauntingly familiar.

"Heretic!" The Redemptionist screamed. "Sinner! You will be cleansed! You will burn in the fire of the... " His voice trailed away as the black-draped figures advanced to the edge of the circle of light. They seemed to him perverse reflections of the brethren of the Redemptionist Crusade; their robes and equipment ash-blackened and grim, bone-skull masks covered their faces, silent and forbidding.

"Peace brother, peace." Again the voice spoke with such calm authority that it stilled the Redemptionist's thrashings. "You have come to us; it is the Emperor's will."

"You dare speak his holy name!" The Redemptionist screamed back at him.

"I am the true servant!" The silken voice roared with such force the Redemptionist could only cower and whimper helplessly in response.

"Soon brother, soon the veil that covers your sight shall be lifted. You shall know peace, you shall walk the path: you will cast off the falsehood of your liar-priests and know the Emperor's true will on this blighted world. Serve us, serve the brotherhood of the true resurrection, and serve him – the undying one."

"That is not dead which cannot die!" The terrible, dry voices of the other dark figures rasped in unison.

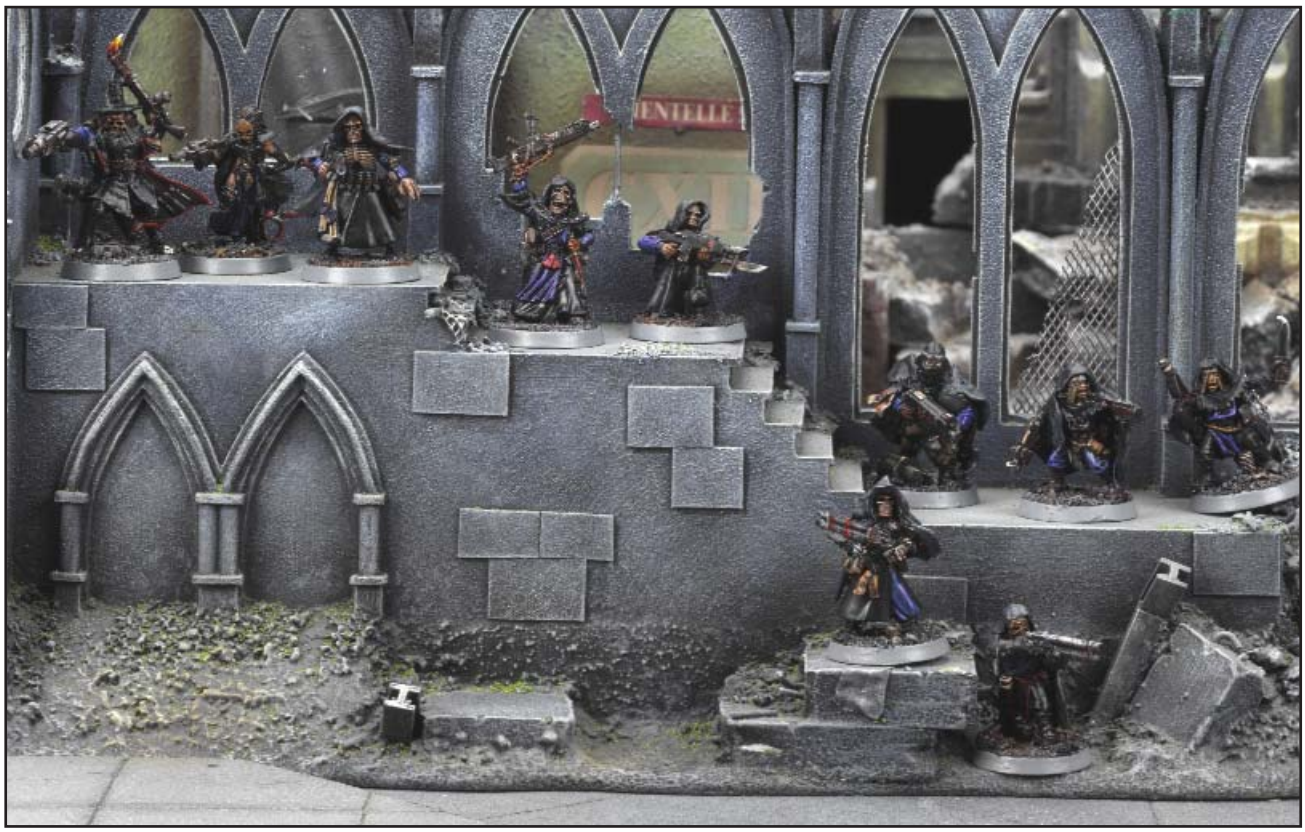
"Who... who are you?" The Redemptionist pleaded.

"I am Mathias, brother, and I am your saviour in His name. In us you will find life eternal in his service." The one called Mathias leaned forward, dozens of tiny silver aquillas tinkling against bone fetishes; he extended a gloved hand to the Redemptionist. "Join us and know the truth of the Emperor's work. Join us and do His will. Join us in our battle and if you prove worthy, receive the life eternal."

The Redemptionist gazed up into the empty black pits of Mathias' eyes and his blood froze in his veins as he realised that the black-robed priest wore no mask at all...

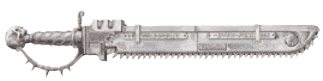
are a lot of different ways to decide on what gang/army/team, etc you're going to pick when coming fresh to a game. I know a lot of gamers have a preferred style of play (all-out aggressive, stand back and shoot, highly mobile, etc) and go for a force that will suit their style, while others make their decision based on the models they like best (which is no bad plan, because if you really like the models, you'll enjoy painting and gaming with them a whole lot more). There are some people who try to work out which is the all-round hardest army in any given game. This is, of course, somewhat inadvisable as a lot goes into balancing out GW games, and the 'undefeatable' force is a bit of a myth in my experience, particularly in Necromunda where positioning and manoeuvre can play such an important role in a game's result. Personally, I fall into that group of gamers that are very background orientated; I love good 'fluff' if I can put it like that, and often pick a particular force if the concept behind them appeals to me, and I like their fictional game background. So with this in mind I immersed myself in the game material to see what leapt out shouting 'play me!'. I had a good search through the Underhive rulebook, on the Fanatic website and through my back collection of Necromunda stuff, and while the shiny new Enforcer models appealed greatly I actually settled on the House of Cawdor. They seemed more grim and driven than the other House gangs, with their adherence to the Imperial Cult and covered faces setting them apart from the rest. I also liked the miniatures and already had a few (admittedly slightly insane) ideas about how I could do something interesting with them and make my gang a very individual force on the tabletop.

IT'S CAWDOR JIM, BUT NOT AS WE KNOW IT:
I'd had a few gaming ideas bouncing around in my head looking for an outlet for a while, one of which was to try and do something with the idea of Imperial Death Cults. One idea that I'd had with this was to detail a cult of 'resurrectionists;' a sect that focused on the Emperor sacrificing his mortal life in battle, but overcoming death. Prophesying that the Emperor is going to get back up off the Golden Throne having 'defeated' death and enabling his followers to do the same in a dodgy sort of 'voodoo death cult' thing sounded cool to me. I'd had the idea of working these resurrectionists into an Inquisitor narrative (which I may still do), but when Harry mentioned his dark plans for a series of linked scenarios based on cult movies, I immediately thought of the resurrectionist idea I'd had. After all, there's always room for one more crazed mob of gun-wielding lunatics in the 40K background, and the nightmare of the Underhive seemed as likely place as any for them to thrive. It also fitted in perfectly with my choice of House Cawdor as, alone among the Hive houses, they took the Imperial Creed to heart, (after all they are the House of Redemption). I could easily see another schismatic take on the Imperial faith growing up secretly in their midst. I even toyed with using the Redemptionist rules, but disregarded the idea after looking into it as they didn't quite fit with what I wanted, and it felt too much like fudging things just so I could get some special abilities for them. In the end I was happier sticking to the basic Cawdor list as it's nice and straightforward, the skills and weapons suited the idea I had of them anyway and their place would be compatible with the background. So my gang for this campaign would be The Brotherhood of the True Resurrection; a House Cawdor gang that had joined the resurrection cult, but was still close to the ways of House Cawdor. I saw them set to guard the advance of the inner sanctum of the True Resurrection as it began to spread in the Underhive, and who knows, perhaps I'd get to write full gang rules for the dark heart of the resurrectionists some day.



PUTTING TOGETHER THE GANG ROSTER:
When I sat down to decide what would be in my starting gang, the very definite picture in my imagination made it pretty easy. I wanted them based on the idea of a of a cult hit squad, one of a number perhaps sent to take over a section of the Underhive on the edge of Cawdor held territory to secure an outpost base for the cult, with the resurrectionists spreading slowly like a cancer in House Cawdor rather than being like the fire and brimstone roving crusades of the Redemption. I would design my gang as an attacking force; more dependant on numbers and storm tactics than standing back with heavy weapons and letting rip, or approaching by stealth (ultimately all Cawdor gang-members also have access to ferocity skills so this also made sense). I wanted a solid core of Gangers to advance, guns blazing, with my Gang Leader – a cult fanatic at the head of the assault. Just to cover my bases with a little tactical flexibility I also wanted a back line of two or three models with rifles to provide covering fire and pick off priority targets at range. I also put into practice an old personal rule of mine for Necromunda – hold-outs: everybody, even lowly Juves, would get a back-up gun. This is because guns in Necromunda will fail when you least want them to, and I like to be prepared for that eventuality.

You will also note that my Heavy doesn't actually have a heavy weapon, which may strike you as a bit bizarre. There are a few reasons for this. For a start, the lack of the big gun allowed me to spread some creds around. Move or fire weapons tend to lead to a static style of play which I didn't want for the gang, and the Heavy (with or without a very big gun) has access to different skill groups which I hoped to exploit as the gang developed (hence his inclusion rather than a cheaper Ganger for the same job).



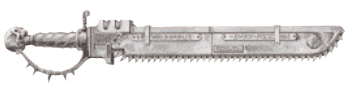
My boss ended up with a chainsword and a flamer, making him a fairly scary prospect in a fight, while my Heavy benefited from the Cawdor access to a boltgun as a basic weapon (I chose laspistols as back-up for both of these because of the high likelihood of ammo-outages on their main weapon). As for the rest, I decided to spread about a good bit of firepower quite evenly around my six Gangers, including hot-shot shells, dum-dum rounds and frag grenades, with an autogun and a lasgun for a little supporting fire. Going against what I know is 'the done thing' with some players, I actually decided to give my Juves (just two of them in the end) some decent kit, reasoning it's better to have them as something more than just mobile sandbags for the Gangers.

On a final point, the students of mythology and weird fiction among you might recognise a few of the names I gave to my lads (and lass)!

SELECTING THE MINIATURES:

First off I should tell you that I'm an incorrigible 'cobbler' of miniatures. I love to convert stuff, and while I will make no claims to brilliance as a sculptor (far from it), it's an aspect of the hobby I really enjoy and I like to have a go. So I formulated a plan to bring my Brotherhood into being; my concept for the look of my gang was already set: black hooded robes, skull masks, pale skin, parchment seals and deathly iconography, but still recognisable as House Cawdor in origin. I also didn't want to just get Redemptionists and paint them black as that would have been very unsatisfying, so after ploughing through the Specialist Games catalogue and the Online Store I had a few ideas. The gang's Juves would have 'straight' Cawdor looks, the idea being that they are recent converts, while the Gangers, being full 'Brothers and Sisters of the True Resurrection', would be a mixture of Cawdor miniature conversions and robed and masked models made using converted Mordheim Possessed brethren (I've always thought these were gorgeous miniatures and the robes and skulls on many of them were too good to pass up). Also I planned to covert some of my own creations from the basis of Warhammer High Elf Archer plastics, (as these offer something of a blank canvas to work from by way of a suitable body), and I was planning to use some spare skeleton skulls I had lying round in my bits box for heads – making Green Stuff cowls to round them off. My initial idea for a leader was to use a converted Redemptionist deacon, but I had a sudden inspiration when talking about my idea for a gang to a colleague. Looking at my models he said 'are you going to add a top hat then?' referring to Baron Samedi (of voodoo and James Bond fame) and I was suddenly struck with the idea of the hat-wearing Witch Hunter Inquisitor model. With a slight tweak or two I could make the Inferno pistol pass for a flamer and set about the rest. My next stop was to get hold of some Necromunda weapons sprues to cover the guns I wanted for the gang and get to it!

Painting the Gang: I set out with a simple but definitive colour scheme in mind to unify the different converted miniatures in the gang: dusty black with bone detailing. The black in question would be Chaos Black drybrushed lightly with Codex Grey on the robes, cloaks and primary areas of clothing to indicate that they were hard-worn by the Brotherhood, rather than a shiny or high-contrast black (they are crawling around in the Underhive after all). The base colour for their weapons would be similarly dark – a one to one Boltgun Metal and Chaos Black mix, highlighted with Chainmail, with areas given thinned Flesh Wash layers to signify age and rust. Detail areas of cloth, such as face masks and wrapping, would be a bone-like off-white; a white built up from Vermin Brown with thinned Flesh Wash applied again to give a deliberately dirty appearance, while actual bone parts (such as the skull masks worn by some) would be Bleached Bone with a white highlight and possibly a gloss varnish to provide a polished look. I also had in mind to do some clothing sections in muted versions of the reds and blues associated with the Redemptionists and Cawdor, making them look like faded relics of the gang members' past lives.



DARK THINGS WALK ABROAD IN THE UNDERHIVE:

So there you are, my Brotherhood of the True Resurrection ready to bring the 'peace' of the Emperor to the Underhive, and I'm really looking forward to fielding them in battle. They go to show you can come up with an individual and unique force for a game by inventing an imaginative background and sticking to it when you design the list. As you can see, once I had in my mind 'who' the gang was the rest of the decisions about the roster, modelling and paint schemes kind of made themselves.

TECHKANA WARPARTY

When the guys here in the office decided to start up a Necromunda campaign I jumped at the chance to join in. Warhammer World has some really great Necromunda scenery and I love all our game systems that have a campaign structure whereby I can watch my gang/team/warband develop. When deciding which gang I wanted to take for the campaign I was torn between starting with a gang I had never used before, such as the great new Enforcers or Spyrers, or revisiting one of my old favourites. In the end there was only one choice I could make: my old favourites, the Ratskins. I have been telling all who would listen how they used to be my favourite gang, so now that we have new models and new rules how could I not use them in the campaign?

Ratskins have always been one of the coolest things about Necromunda and I have always tried to include a Ratskin Renegade in my gangs wherever possible. I love the Native American influences that the background and the figures imply and I feel it really emphasises the "old west" or "frontier" feel of the Underhive setting wonderfully. Of course, it helps that they are some of the best figures we have in the Necromunda range and that we have great new figures. This enables a cunning Ratskin Chief to arm his or her Ratskins for both close combat or for firefights as appropriate.

The Ratskin Renegade gang has been my favourite ever since their first appearance in the Outlanders supplement purely because I loved the imagery and the background for the gang. Whilst the new version of the rules has now left my beloved Shaman out in the cold I have been assured that they will make a reappearance and I now have the Totem Warriors which more than make up for his (temporary) removal.

Ratskin Renegades are not like a regular gang in that they are Outlanders and so operate outside the law and outside the bounds of civilisation in the Hive. Since they are native in the Underhive they are immune to the effects of the Treacherous Conditions table and must, in fact, use this table during all of their games. This can make life very difficult for opposing gangs whose mobility may be limited, or whose shooting may become much less effective at range. This is one of the reasons why I like the Ratskin Renegades because this rule makes games much more interesting and will make for a different challenge in every game for your opponent as he or she battles, not only with your gang, but also in some cases with the Underhive itself!

As an Outlander gang, the Ratskin Renegades do not have much access to territory and income must be foraged after every battle. The good thing is that the Ratskins are quite good at foraging and so can be relied upon most of the time to find sufficient food for themselves to eat. Each gang member requires 3 creds worth of upkeep to be spent on them per Post Battle sequence. Now since each one, if sent to forage, generates 1D6+1 creds you can expect a Ratskin to be able to feed himself 83% of the time and will turn a profit, albeit a small one, 50% of the time. Now as we all know you can't assume all your gang members will be active in the Post Battle

sequence, but as a rule this means you can be quite confident of being able to get by. A Ratskin will find sufficient food for two gang members 33% of the time.

Replacing deceased gang members or increasing the size of the gang can also be quite difficult, but this is counterbalanced by the natural resilience of the Ratskins. Whilst a Ratskin Hired Gun gets two rolls on the Injury table and gets to pick the best one, the Ratskin Renegades have a lesser version of this enabling them to re-roll a result on the Injury table should they not like the first. This means that it is much more likely that a Ratskin taken *out of action* in a game will survive to fight on. If you only use your re-roll on results of a 11-16 Death then the chance of death is reduced from around 17% to a mere 3%. This also means that if you consider the results 41-66 as "beneficial" result then you can increase the chance of getting a beneficial result from 50% to 75% although doing so will increase the chance of death. It is up to you to decide if the gang member is worth the gamble.

The final factors that made me fall in love with this gang are their ability to effect the scenario roll in the same way as a Ratskin Hired Gun does for regular gangs, and the fact that they all come armed with a free knife and a free club. This means that I can hire gang members that are perfectly able to function without any additional equipment purely as hand-to-hand specialists, and I can try to ambush those gangs with Archeotech Horde territories to drive them away from our sacred sites.

I decided that I would include a mixture of old Ratskin figures with a few new ones and some conversions to make my gang as unique and individual as possible. To that end I ordered one of each of the classic Ratskin figures, some new Ratskin blisters and a few figures and sprues to use in conversions. In the end I actually assembled and converted over 25 figures for the gang and am only using 14 of these for my starting gang. Essentially I just assembled what looked good and did not worry about how the models were armed. I then selected my starting gang from these figures.

I decided early on that I wanted to include at least one Totem Warrior in my gang as I really wanted to see how good they were and have a go with the cool new spirit weaponry. I have converted my Totem Warrior "Strikes from Shadow" out of Brakar the old Ratskin Hired Gun, with a large axe from the new Ratskin close combat sprue and an axe from the Warhammer Marauders of Chaos sprue which I had lying around in my bits box. "Strikes from Shadow" counts as being armed with a spirit totem in the form of the cool archeotech-looking axe and a club, meaning he will be awesome in close combat and will be able to absorb many enemy spirits as they depart their worthless bodies.

"Strikes from Shadow" will be accompanied by two Braves to soak up the flak whilst he charges in. Instead of using the normal Brave models, I decided to use some Giant Rats to represent my Totem Warrior's allies. They use exactly the same rules as for normal Braves, just different models. The best part is I can get away with counting their teeth as their free knife, and their claws as their free club.

I also set about converting the Underhive Scum model with the auto pistol and plasma pistol because I have always felt that he looks a little like a Ratskin with the beads in his hair or could in fact be a Goliath gang member with a little Ratskin blood in him. Either way he makes for a great addition to my gang and will be leading one of my close combat groups into the fray with his auto pistol and pick. The pick replaces the plasma pistol (which was simply clipped off) and is from the Chaos Marauder sprue as well.

When I first began to play Necromunda I took a Cawdor gang which contained very few members, but each was armed to the teeth with either grenades or back-up pistols should their main basic weapon armament fail its ammo roll. I soon decided this was a bad idea as my opponents would simply take a small group of my gang *out of action* and I would have to start making Bottle tests which I would eventually fail even if I was in a beneficial position. I now try to include as many gang members as I can to as to prevent early bottle outs and to work on the theory that "everything counts in large amounts."

I decided to carry the Native American stereotype through to my gang by naming them using the naming convention whereby they are named after something from the Underhive. This led me to names such as "Leaking Sump," "Drifting Ash" and, my personal favourite, "Old Gunk Tank." I have also decided to throw a few more natural sounding Native American sounding names in the form of "Dancing Shadow" and "Howling Wind" whilst still maintaining an Underhive undertone.

As the Ratskins progress they will gain access to Combat, Agility and Stealth skills. I intend to load up on Stealth skills for my Ratskins armed with longer range weapons such as autoguns and shotguns, and the close combat Ratskins and Braves will try to get an equal balance of both Agility and Combat skills. If necessary I will move weapons round in the gang to make sure the right person is armed with the right weapons.

I decided not to purchase any blindsnake pouches for the gang just yet, primarily because that would reduce the number of members I could include, but also because in early practise games very few people used *overwatch* to any great effect. We'll have to see if I change my mind once we start for real.

TRIAL BY FIRE

Ever wondered how people actually join a Necromunda gang? Is it like the school playground, where two gang leaders choose guys one at a time until the chubby kid who's not allowed to do sports is left? Or is there some sort of job centre for adolescent wannabe psychopaths who turn up for an interview?

Personally I think it's more likely that a group of juves turn up together and ask to join the gang. And Necromunda, being the hard-bitten sinkhole of the universe, I think it's highly likely that they would have to perform some task to prove their bravery and loyalty. This scenario shows such a Trial By Fire.

TERRAIN

The set up for the game is played on a normal board set for a gang fight, except there is one objective marker placed in the centre of the board.

GANGS

One player takes up to five Juves who may be equipped with up to 30 points of equipment each. The other player is the defender, and takes his normal gang.

The defenders place their figures first in groups of no more than three (with at least 8" between each group) and these groups patrol using the Sentry rules, all the models of a group keeping within 3" of each other.

The defenders do not get to sound the alarm until a Juve comes within spotting distance (Initiative x 2"), or an attacking Juve opens fire.

Once the alarm is sounded the defenders can move as normal and have no need to roll Bottle tests as they are at their base camp. Defenders who voluntarily bottle automatically lose a territory to the victors as their reputation takes a nosedive.

The attacking Juves start on random table edges. Roll separately for each Juve.

The attacking Juves do not take Bottle tests, nor do they roll All Alone tests. They know that this is make or break.

STARTING THE GAME

The Juves go first.

EARNING THEIR STRIPES

There are three ways a Juve can earn his stripes:

1: Put an enemy Ganger *out of action* in hand-to-hand combat (collecting some item or trinket to prove the kill).

2: Tag the base: spend a turn in base-to-base contact with the objective at the centre of the board (with spray can at the ready).

3: Wound the enemy Gang Leader. By taking on the best the enemy has to offer the Juve shows his true potential.

Once a Juve has completed one of the tasks he can leave the battle. Remove the model when it reaches the edge of the board.

ENDING THE GAME

The game lasts until the Juves are all *out of action* (likely), completed their missions and left the board (unlikely) or have defeated the entire defending gang (miraculous).

EXPERIENCE

Experience is awarded to Juves as follows.

+5 pts	Each enemy Ganger taken *out of action.*
+10 pts	Tagging the base.
+15 pts	Hurting the Gang Leader.
+5 pts	Getting safely off the board after your task is completed.

Defenders gain Experience as per a normal gang fight.

The harder the opposition the more Experience the Juves gain from their Trial by Fire. For every whole 100 pts over 1,600 the enemy gang's rating is, they gain a further +1 Experience; eg, a gang with 1,830 rating would mean each Juve would gain a further +2 Experience.

SPECIAL RULES

Any Juve captured by the defending gang may well switch allegiance to save his neck. Before rolling for injuries on a Juve who has been taken *out of action*, roll a D6. On a roll of a 6 he jumps ship and joins the defenders (keeping any equipment he started with).

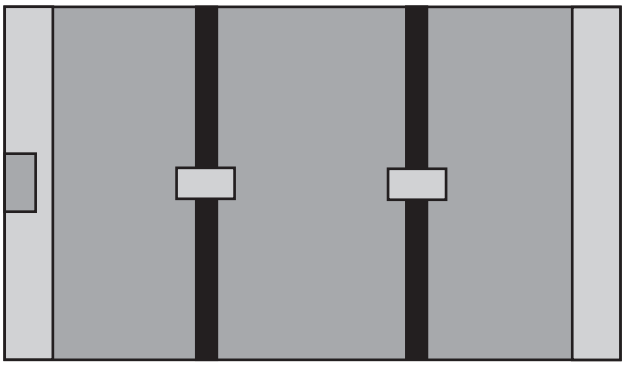
WAGONS ROLL

"Look I don't care whether you two gangs hate each other this contraband has to get through tomorrow. Now sort your differences out on your own time." The trader stood at the end of his table chewing the end of his expensive Iho stick. "I want this to go well. Krieger, your guys are to take the northern checkpoint just as the caravan comes into sight. Dead Dog, your boys hold the southern checkpoint. Tatiana, you and your girls are close security on the delivery. If the caravan makes it through we're all rich; if it doesn't the deal's off and you're as broke as I will be."

This scenario is for veteran gamers, preferably as a finale to a major section of a campaign. It would suit a gaming club very well. It will take about twice as long to play as a normal game so make sure you're prepared for the long haul.

TERRAIN

You need two 6' x 4' boards (to make a 12' x 4' gaming area) for this game with plenty of terrain and two bridges across gaping holes in the floor (I use two 6" wide strips of black cloth to signify the chasms).



THE GANGS

The job's simple: get the caravan off the table. The only problem is that there are three gangs trying to stop you. This scenario is for six gangs (three attacking to break a path for the caravan, and three defending their territories). In addition you'll need something to represent the caravan.

The caravan sets up in the middle of one of the short board edges. The attacking gang that's been given the job of escorting the caravan sets up within 12" of its charge. The second attacking gang is deployed in the 18" zone at one end of the board (near the caravan). The third gang deploys in the 18" zone at the opposite end.

Three gangs have teamed up to defend their territory against 'the smugglers', as they see the trader and his caravan. The first two choose a bridge each, and set up within 12" of it. The third defending gang is split into three parts by the owner and forms a reserve. Decide where you want each part of the reserve to arrive (any board edge), and then roll to see if they turn up at the start of each of your turns. If you can roll under the current turn number on a D6 then the group arrives. Roll separately for each group. Note that this means the reserves cannot arrive on turn one.

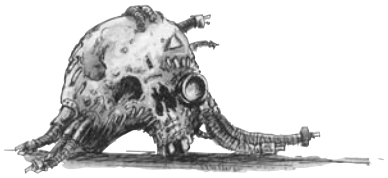
STARTING THE GAME

The attackers go first and at the end of their turns the caravan moves up to 9". The caravan may not cross any of the bridges unless there are more friendly figures than enemy within 6" of the bridge.

As they have a financial commitment to the mission the attackers get to re-roll their first failed Bottle test.

ENDING THE GAME:

If all the defenders or all the attackers fail their bottle rolls then the other side wins. Otherwise, if the caravan gets through to the opposite table edge the attackers win. If the defenders get four figures within 6" of the caravan, and there are no attackers in that area, then the defenders win.



EXPERIENCE

+D6 pts Surviving the Battle: D6
+10 pts per winning Gang Leader
+5 pts Each enemy *out of action*: 5 pts

FINANCIAL

Gangs that were on the winning side and didn't bottle out get to split the proceeds from the caravan between them:

150 credits
3D3 rolls on the Rare Item chart
3 blindsnake pouches

You can choose to split this booty in whichever way is mutually acceptable to the Gang Leaders.